

**Key to Virtual School Content**

I am presently building content for Clay Virtual Academy, a virtual school created by our county for students who need or desire a public school virtual environment. Next week, I have been asked to present to two other Florida counties how I accomplish this. When carefully considering all I do and all the resources available, I came to the realization that Discovery has become key to our content.

In order to build content, you must address the standards for each grade level. Discovery not only has a world of information to meet these standards, but makes it easy to find these resources with connections to related material as well. Once the foundation is built, Discovery really fleshes out material in formats to meet diverse learning styles.

Visualization is a necessity to a virtual lesson. Discovery has images, videos, clips, and simulations that meet this need. Whether building background information, introducing new concepts, or providing a review, the videos and video clips take the student into a visual building experience that enhances the learning process.

Quizzes can be created using questions from the Discovery bank or may be created by the teacher. The teacher has the option of multiple choice single answer or multiple answers, true-false, or short answer questions. The questions can be presented with a video clip or presentation, as well. Tests can be modified and individually assigned to meet the student's special accommodations. The student only has to go online to take the test and the teacher has the option of having Discovery notify them when the test has been completed. Multiple choice and true-false questions are graded for the teacher and grades are posted. The teacher can personally grade short answer or essay questions and incorporate them into the test grade or use them for bonus points. Teachers can then use this data to drive their curriculum, identify areas for reteaching, and identify areas for enrichment.

While there are many wonderful resources on the Internet, safety must always be a concern for the educational provider. Because Discovery is password protected, students are not subjected to spam or inappropriate content. Accessing the material is easy for the student, and the teacher can set it up through Assignment Builder so that the student accesses all Discovery assignments at one time or set it up to be presented in smaller increments. The teacher can also set it up so that he/she is notified by email the minute the student completes the assignment so the teacher can connect to the information and give the student immediate feedback.

While the webcam or posting videos of a teacher performing an experiment is possible in the virtual classroom, a professional demonstration via video or an interactive activity from Discovery really solidifies the learning process.

Whether pulling informational articles from Discovery, using Discovery audio for music video montages, creating Writing Prompts, quizzes, or assignments Discovery has the resources for a rich virtual environment.